
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1465

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By House Committee on Early Learning & Children's Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Roberts, Haler, Pettigrew, McDonald, Appleton, Darneille, McIntire, Kagi, P. Sullivan, Walsh, Green, Schual-Berke, Dickerson, Ormsby, Haigh, Morrell, Hasegawa and Lantz)

READ FIRST TIME 02/13/07.

1 AN ACT Relating to consultation services for early learning and
2 child care programs; creating new sections; and providing an expiration
3 date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds there is compelling
6 evidence demonstrating that infants and young children who experience
7 high-quality early care and learning environments exhibit more school
8 readiness skills upon entering the school, including better language
9 skills, more advanced cognitive development, and greater abilities to
10 regulate their behavior. These outcomes are inextricably linked to a
11 child's overall success in school and beyond. The legislature also
12 finds that an increasing number of children in early childhood settings
13 are presenting with significant behavioral and socioemotional health
14 concerns. When caregivers lack adequate support or training to
15 identify and appropriately respond to such behaviors, the result is
16 often that these children are expelled, and thus they experience little
17 or no stability or continuity in their early care and learning
18 experiences. The legislature further finds that behavioral and
19 socioemotional health are critical components of a child's readiness

1 for school, and when not adequately addressed, these issues can create
2 the potential of significant and lifelong negative consequences. The
3 legislature finds that providing consultation services to early care
4 and learning settings can provide information, education, and support
5 for caregivers and parents to enable them to work more effectively with
6 children presenting challenging or concerning behaviors. The
7 legislature intends to promote the integration of consultation services
8 into early care and learning settings as a means of ensuring school
9 readiness for more children.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The growing skills for kids pilot
11 program is established. The pilot program shall be administered by the
12 department of early learning and shall promote the integration into
13 early care and learning settings of research-based and promising
14 practices for responding to infants and young children with challenging
15 or concerning behaviors. The integration of research-based and
16 promising practices shall be done using a collaborative approach to
17 supporting children and their families.

18 (2) The pilot program shall consist of at least two communities
19 selected by the department of early learning on the basis of need as
20 determined by:

21 (a) The relative availability or unavailability of comparable
22 consultation services locally; and

23 (b) The risk factors present in the community, including but not
24 limited to elevated rates of expulsion from early care and learning
25 programs and the prevalence in the community of poverty, homelessness,
26 uninsured families or children, child abuse or neglect, parental mental
27 illness or chemical dependency, adolescent parents, or violence.

28 (3) Funding shall be contracted to a local child care resource and
29 referral network, public health department, or other community-based
30 agency with knowledge or expertise in infant and child development and
31 early care and learning programs. Contracted agencies shall be
32 responsible for:

33 (a) Coordinating with the community to develop a program model
34 consistent with the legislative intent in section 1 of this act and the
35 description of program structure in subsection (4) of this section;

36 (b) Hiring consultants with training and expertise including:

1 (i) Knowledge of infant and early childhood behavioral development
2 and health, child care, family support, and early intervention systems;

3 (ii) Knowledge and experience related to specialized topics of
4 concern to staff members and issues of relevance to the communities and
5 families receiving consultation services; and

6 (iii) Understanding of diverse populations;

7 (c) Supervising the work of consultants;

8 (d) Responding to requests for consultation services from early
9 care and learning providers, including licensed family home providers;

10 (e) Maintaining information required for evaluation of program
11 outcomes;

12 (f) Managing funds;

13 (g) Promoting equitable access to consultation services for early
14 care and learning providers in the community; and

15 (h) Reporting to the department of early learning, which shall
16 brief the appropriate committees of the legislature.

17 (4) The pilot program shall provide a structure for consultants to:

18 (a) Consult with caregivers on-site or with case management teams
19 around addressing specific needs related to an individual child or
20 family;

21 (b) Observe children in early care and learning settings to assess
22 functioning relationships with peers and caregivers and the
23 appropriateness of the setting and program for meeting the child's
24 needs;

25 (c) Meet with parents on-site or at home to exchange information
26 and offer developmental guidance and referrals, including but not
27 limited to referrals to clinical and other services for families and
28 children;

29 (d) Provide support and guidance to child care staff through
30 structured opportunities for training, team building, communication,
31 and problem solving that is person-centered and strengths-based; and

32 (e) Coordinate with specialists in public health, infant and
33 toddler early intervention, children's behavioral and emotional health,
34 and others with knowledge and expertise in the care and well-being of
35 young children.

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act may be known and cited as the
37 growing skills for kids act.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Sections 1 through 3 of this act expire July
2 1, 2011.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** If specific funding for the purposes of this
4 act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by
5 June 30, 2007, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and
6 void.

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